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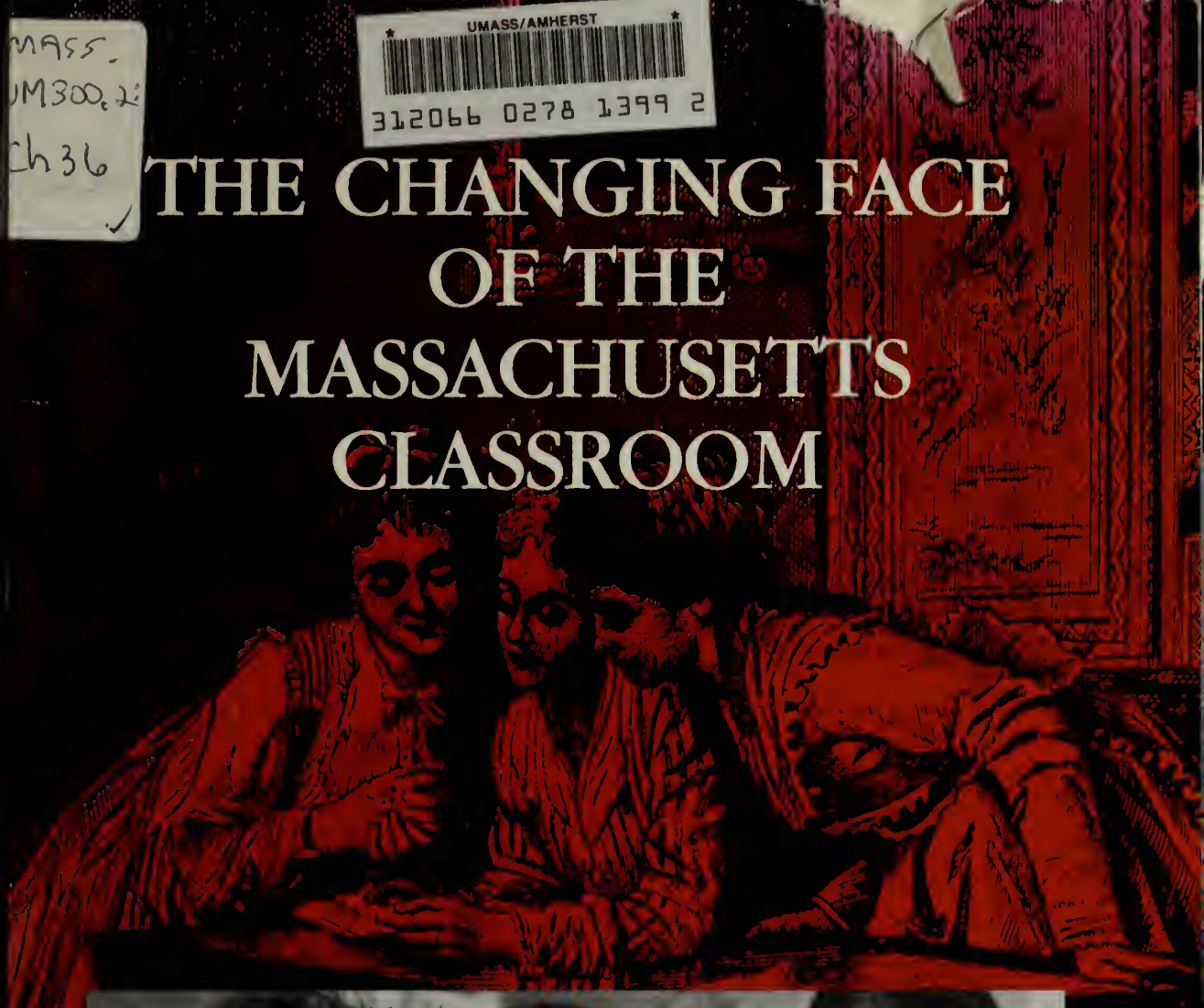
THE CHANGING FACE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CLASSROOM



I come from a family of teachers

One hundred years ago my great-grandfather taught in a one-room schoolhouse in upstate New York. Twenty years later, his daughter was teaching in a similar school, probably using the same McGuffey reader, following a familiar pattern of passing knowledge and values on to the young. Her son—my father—started as a teacher, and, like his two brothers, finished his career as a principal in a school where most of the students were the children of immigrants. Today, my sister is an elementary school teacher. For the Knapps, teaching has been the family trade.

My family, like generations of Americans, prospered under our educational system. The schools prepared our children to be productive, literate citizens. Many of my forebears saw teaching as their contribution to society, and they were well prepared by their educations to stimulate learning in their students. Even then the schools had problems, but the system worked for many.

But today there is mounting evidence that our education system no longer does the job it is supposed to do. We demand more and more from our schools. Too many students drop out. Too many graduates cannot read. Teaching is no longer a respected profession.

Like my relatives before me, I have followed the family trade. My perspective on learning may be different from that of my forebears, but as head of a university of 40,000 students, I have a special appreciation for a fundamental problem of modern classroom education. Indeed, I am caught in a persistent crossfire between my faculty and the public schools, each side voicing concern about the ability of the other to understand and deliver quality education.

A universal grievance of professors is that incoming students are poorly prepared for higher education. Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, recently reported that 54 percent of 5,000 faculty members surveyed found that their students had come out of high school with 'fair or poor' academic abilities . On the other hand, much of the public, especially parents and employers, complains that colleges and universities are not producing the top-caliber teachers who can transmit the knowledge and values which underpin American culture. The results are often students unready for college, ill-prepared for modern life.

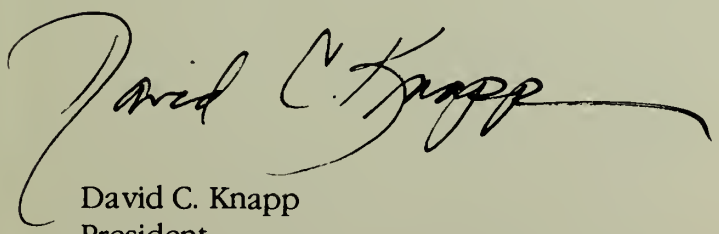
What is most troubling about this dialogue is that both sides are right. Some students come to college unable to cope with their academic reponsibilities. Remedial courses in basic skills threaten to become growth industries on many of our campuses. And we are not

producing enough teachers who can meet the needs of those in the classrooms today. Our best students do not see teaching as a rewarding and important profession. The result is a system out-of-phase, unable to produce in one generation what is needed to secure the success of the next.

The problems that plague public education today are complex, with no easy solutions. The schools at times have been overwhelmed by the social, demographic and technological changes which have swept America in recent decades. We know that American schools are changing in terms of both teachers and students. Armed with that knowledge, we should not continue to prepare teachers for an 'Ozzie and Harriet' world, each child confident, each child equipped for success in the classroom.

Rather than assigning blame for our condition, our challenge is to put the system back together, in fact to make it better than it was. My special concern is to channel the resources of higher education into the effort to improve the way our children are taught. Improving the classroom experience will require the commitment and resources of many institutions in society. We all must play a part in the work of rebuilding confidence in our schools. Institutions of higher learning and elementary and secondary schools share an obligation to work together to improve the totality of education.

The continued success of both the University and of society at large is dependent on the quality of the education that prepares citizens to take their places as productive members of our world. Whether a young person matriculates at a college or university, or chooses to enter the work world immediately after leaving school, his or her success is a direct function of the quality of education received. Put simply, students must succeed in kindergarten through high school if they are to succeed in the workplace and college, and as American citizens.



David C. Knapp
President
University of Massachusetts

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

At the University of Massachusetts our primary mission is to teach, and over the past 125 years we have built a strong tradition of innovation in education in Massachusetts. The University was established in 1863 'to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes,' in the words of Senator Justin S. Morrill of Vermont, author of the legislation that made available federal territory—land grants—to support public higher education. Through the years the University has educated more than 150,000 Massachusetts citizens, including thousands who chose primary and secondary education as a career. In 1985 the University was the leading source of teachers for the public schools of the Commonwealth. With more than 90,000 alumni living in Massachusetts, our graduates have a personal interest in the quality of the public schools their children attend. In more than one sense, University alumni represent a major constituency for quality public education.

But a fundamental reason for the University's interest in our schools is proprietary, and perhaps even selfish. There is a critical interdependence between public education and the University's continuing need for students. This year's high school seniors are next year's freshmen on our campuses. The University exists to give every resident of the Commonwealth an opportunity to obtain quality higher education. We plant our seeds in minds that have been prepared by the public schools. If those minds lie fallow after twelve years of education, we are all at a loss, and the University of Massachusetts may be the biggest loser.

THE CHANGING CLASSROOM

The world of our children is far removed from our own experience. We recognize the changes that are occurring in the way America works. Our industrial base is eroding as we develop an economy organized around the delivery of services rather than the manufacture of goods. While we are continually reminded of changes in the workplace, however, we are perhaps less aware of the significant changes occurring in our public schools. Lifestyle shifts, change in the populations in city schools, and a shifting of values in our society have altered the learning landscape in America.

The changing composition of the classroom, especially in our urban areas, underscores the challenge faced by the University and others involved in education. In its report, *A Nation Prepared*, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy summarized the problem: our educational system, good enough to prepare an informed able citizenry yesterday, will not be good enough to ensure that our people enjoy full citizenship tomorrow. And Ernest Boyer has pointed out that *"what the educational system faces is a group of children who will be poorer, more ethnically and linguistically diverse, and have more handicaps that surely will affect their schooling."*

Harold Hodgkinson, a senior fellow at the American Council on Education, has sketched a portrait of tomorrow's students by profiling today's four-year-olds:

- ☐ 24 percent live below the poverty line
- ☐ nearly half will be raised at some point in a single-parent family
- ☐ a higher percentage of these children today than in the past do not speak English as their native language
- ☐ an increasing number have physical and emotional handicaps
- ☐ 54 percent have mothers who work outside the home. By the time they reach school age, two-thirds of their mothers will be working, most of them full-time
- ☐ 20 percent of today's four-year-olds will become parents during their teen years.

Dramatic changes in classroom populations and in the characteristics of the pool of potential teachers will multiply the challenges facing the educational system. It will not become easier to transmit learning to the nation's children. We must anticipate that it will become increasingly difficult to prepare educated citizens as we near the end of the century.

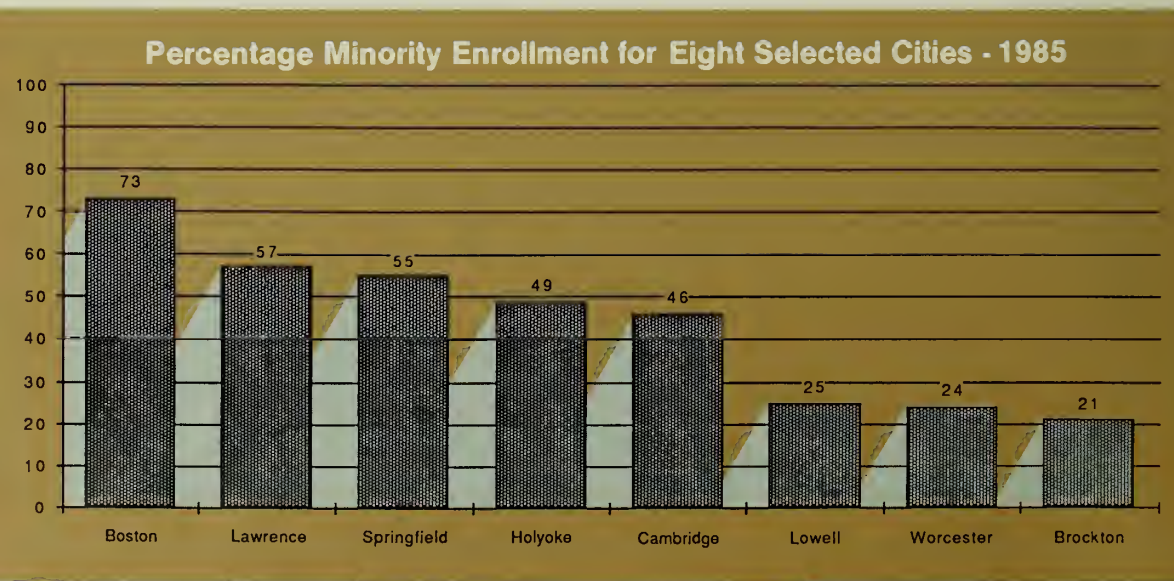
EMERGING STUDENT POPULATIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS

But what does the future hold here in Massachusetts?

The Commonwealth, which has welcomed streams of immigrants over the years, is once again experiencing growth in new populations that will have a profound affect on both our schools and our economy. Hodgkinson, analyzing trends in the state, has observed that minority students represent a rapidly increasing proportion of enrollment in Massachusetts, especially in urban areas, as we move towards the year 2000. Boston schools had 28 percent minority enrollment in 1968, 60 percent in 1978, and 73 percent today. The Massachusetts General Court's Special Commission on Hispanics reported that in 1970, 60,000 citizens of Hispanic origin lived in the state; in 1980 the figure rose to 141,000, and by 1990 it is projected to reach 300,000, with Hispanics outnumbering blacks by 45,000. *The Boston Globe* recently examined the profound changes occurring in the city of Lawrence, where the minority student population has increased from 36 percent in 1979 to 53 percent today, with much of the increase being attributable to strong growth in the Hispanic population.

The evidence seems plain. We must be prepared to educate increasing numbers of minority students, and we must do it primarily in poorer urban areas. A recent study by a University of Massachusetts research center, the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER), graphically chronicled this point. Since 1979 Boston has experienced a 17 percent increase and Chelsea an 80 percent increase in the nonwhite student population. The percentage increase in Springfield was 20 percent; in Lawrence, 53 percent; in Holyoke, 63 percent; and in Lowell, 93 percent.

In Massachusetts, minority students tend to be concentrated in a few school systems. In New Jersey, a state in many ways comparable to Massachusetts, a recent study of urban education noted with alarm that over 60 percent of that state's minority youth were being educated in twenty-nine school systems in disadvantaged urban areas. But in Massachusetts, more than two-thirds of our minority young people are concentrated in just eight systems. We are faced with a disturbing question: how can we ensure that these students have the same chance for success as their peers in the more affluent school systems of the Commonwealth?



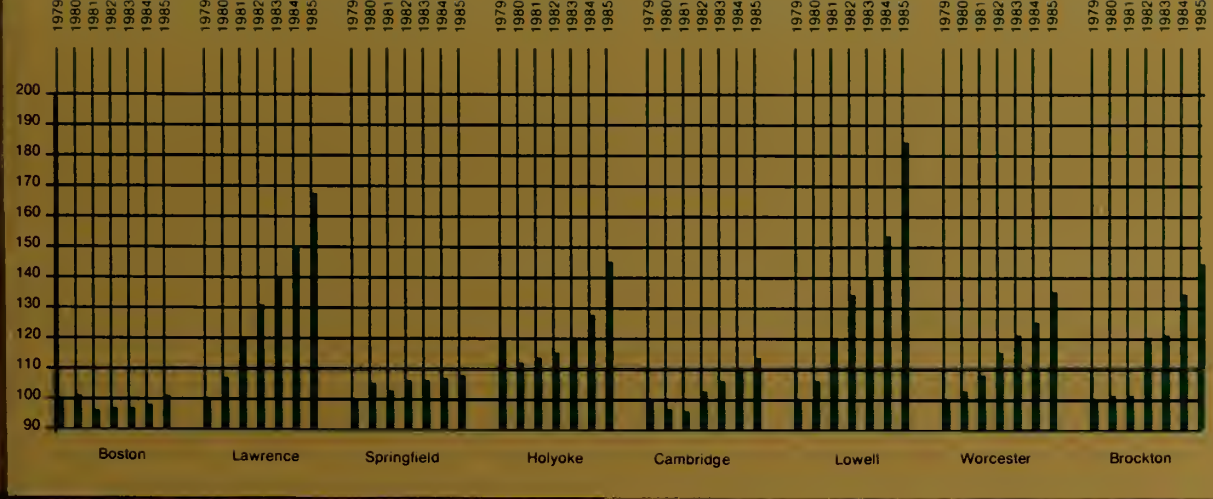
The challenge is made more difficult by our poor record in urban areas, even under current circumstances. A review of the results of the basic skills tests established by Chapter 188 shows that students in urban areas scored significantly lower than students elsewhere. State Education Commissioner Harold Raynolds, in commenting on the first round of statewide testing, said that 'there are serious and continuing disparities in basic skills between advantaged and disadvantaged students.' He went on to report that a student's economic and social background was 'the most significant factor' affecting achievement on the test. Urban students consistently scored lower than any other group, with Boston, Lawrence, Chelsea, Fall River, and Holyoke all scoring well under the statewide average.

The fact that high school dropout rates for the cities are much higher (near 40 percent in Boston) than the state average (25 percent) says much about the difficulty of successfully educating our urban youth. If we do not teach all of our students, not just those who are fortunate enough to attend school in affluent systems, we will suffer the consequences. The risks associated with a failure to educate urban youth are enormous. As the National Alliance for Business has warned, 'No sector (of the economy) can afford a growing underclass that cannot get or keep jobs....'

Massachusetts cannot afford to waste the human potential represented by our city youth. Regardless of how the stock market is performing or where the prime rate rests, our economy's primary resource is its people. And maintaining a healthy Massachusetts economy will depend in large measure on how well we educate an increasingly minority youth population for work and advanced study.

While Massachusetts enjoys the most robust economy of our industrial peers, a recent front-page article in *The Boston Globe* noted that 'the prosperity of the 1980s has failed to put a dent in the number of Massachusetts families living in poverty.' In fact *The Globe* found that between 1979 and 1985 the poverty rate in Massachusetts remained virtually unchanged, despite six years of economic growth. If the strongest state economy in the nation cannot make a dent in the level of contemporary structural poverty, our urban classrooms will continue to be filled with at-risk children from poor families, too many of whom will never graduate.

Percentage Change in Minority Student Enrollment for Eight Selected Cities



THE TEACHER SUPPLY

We confront a future in which urban students will need our help more than ever before. And in giving that help, we will rely heavily on the teachers who lead our urban classrooms.

Improving teaching is a key to improving the schools which serve these students. But the Commonwealth faces thorny problems in attracting and retaining enough quality teachers to educate our citizens. Massachusetts, like many states, is experiencing a decline in its traditional college-age population, the primary recruitment pool for teachers. Harold Hodgkinson's analysis shows that Massachusetts will experience a much steeper decrease in college-age students from 1979 to 1991 (43 percent) than the national average (26 percent). MISER's recent study of teacher supply in the Commonwealth corroborated these findings.

While we must anticipate the impact of a reduction in the number of potential teachers, we must also be concerned about the quality of those who choose education as a career. MISER's data shows that SAT scores of students in Massachusetts expressing an interest in studying education are relatively low, forty-third among the states. This does not necessarily mean that people who ultimately became teachers ranked that low, nor does it mean that our teachers performed poorly in college, but the figures do raise questions about the ability of the teaching profession to attract the best qualified students.

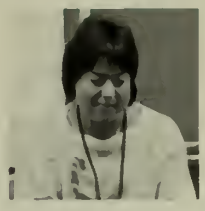
There is evidence that students today are more concerned about salary than they were twenty years ago. As a consequence, they may well be less likely to choose to enter teaching, a career perceived as relatively low-paying. The annual American Council of Education (ACE)-UCLA national freshman survey revealed that in the fall of 1985 nearly 71 percent of college freshmen considered it 'very important' to be well off financially, compared with 43.5 percent in 1967. There is no reason to assume that students in Massachusetts have different attitudes about careers. Indeed, the job opportunities offered by our thriving state economy may make it even more difficult to recruit talented graduates, including minorities and women, into a field that many consider to be a dead end in terms of salary and opportunities for professional growth.

Compounding the problem of low pay for teachers is an emerging new reality of paying for college. Increasingly, students are financing their educations through loans rather than grants and scholarships. The ACE-UCLA survey of incoming college freshmen indicated that the number of federal Pell Grants awarded to freshmen has declined by half since 1980, while the number of students who received loans has risen. A burdensome college loan debt may make students less likely to enter teaching as a profession.

The University's most innovative effort to solve the teacher supply–quality problem is MESTEP, the Math/English/Science/Technology Education Project, based on the Amherst Campus. It has become a model for similar programs throughout the nation. Last February MESTEP received the prestigious national Distinguished Achievement Award in Teacher Education from the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Since its inception four years ago, MESTEP has placed over one hundred of its graduates in classrooms across Massachusetts. The program attracts twenty-one to thirty-year olds who are intrigued by a nontraditional, financially attractive approach to earning a graduate degree and a teacher certification. The program is based upon a cooperative effort among several parties—the University, public school systems, and corporate sponsors such as Digital Equipment Corporation, New England Telephone, Bank of Boston, and Houghton-Mifflin Company. Students combine academic and professional study, intensive student teaching, and both school and corporate internships during their fifteen-month regimens.

MESTEP is designed to reach out to talented people who often have other career experience. The average age of MESTEP students is twenty-four and their undergraduate grade point averages are around 3.4. Minority students accounted for 20 percent of recent MESTEP recruits. By making preparation for teaching rewarding and challenging, by providing attractive employment opportunities in the private sector, and by employing both experienced teachers and graduates of the program as staff members, MESTEP makes teaching a more attractive profession.

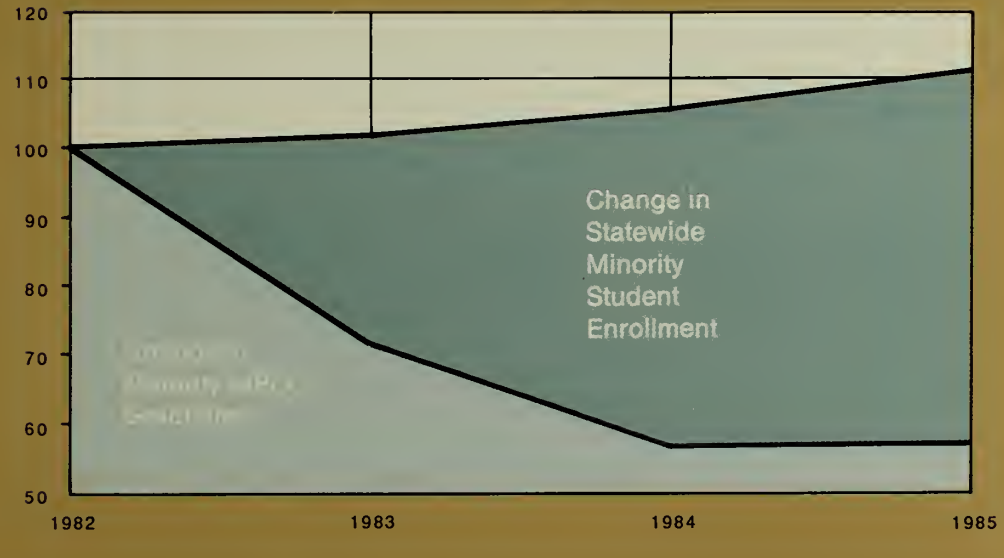


BRINGING MORE MINORITIES INTO TEACHING

> *There are simply not enough minority students graduating from college with strong academic records to meet the need for minority teachers. Only a massive effort to improve the education of minority and poor students from elementary school through graduate school will effectively address the problem.*
>
> —*A Nation Prepared*, The Report of the Carnegie Forum's Task Force on Teaching

Massachusetts, like much of the nation, faces an alarming shortage of minority representation in the teaching profession. MISER has found that the number of minorities graduating from certification-track programs has been steadily decreasing, from 13 percent in 1982 to 6 percent in 1986. The number actually hired is even lower. This is particularly disquieting in light of MISER's findings that while the number of white elementary and secondary school students declined by 23.7 percent between 1979 and 1985, enrollments of all minorities increased by over 7 percent with a 45 percent increase among Hispanic students. As our urban classrooms increasingly serve minority student populations, we must reverse the decline in minority participation in teaching by early identification and support for potential teachers.

Percentage Change in Statewide Minority Student Enrollment and Minority *Massachusetts Program Leading to Certification* (MPLC) Graduates 1982 – 100%



The University has several initiatives that seek out minority college candidates during high school and help them successfully complete college. Our Challenge Program has developed a network of teachers to identify and direct promising minority youth. The program offers admissions help as well as academic and financial support for high school youth who accept the challenge of successfully completing a college preparatory curriculum. The Minority Engineering Program brings junior high and high school students to the Amherst Campus for career orientation and academic courses, and provides the peer and program support needed to earn an engineering degree. At the Boston Campus, the Urban Scholars Program, including the Minority Math and Science Focus program, encourages and supports academic achievement in the city. Another Course to College, run by the Institute of Learning and Teaching at the Boston Campus, gives two hundred Boston high school juniors and seniors expanded opportunities for a college education. Each summer the University brings over one hundred Boston-area students to the Harbor Campus for programs that improve academic skills. While not specifically aimed at recruiting students interested in teaching, these efforts take the first step in improving minority representation in teaching: making higher education more accessible.

Beyond providing undergraduate and graduate training in bilingual education, the University's Boston Campus offers an innovative approach to increasing the supply of these teachers. English Professor Donaldo Macedo has organized a recruitment program in our larger cities that focuses on finding bilingual high school students who are interested and able to pursue a teaching career. Using grant money to pay for tuition and support services, over one hundred promising youngsters have been brought into teacher-track programs at the University's Boston Campus. The success rate of the venture is very high, and Professor Macedo's idea has become a model for meeting the increasing demand for bilingual teachers.

The Office of Minority Affairs at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester sponsors a variety of programs which help nonwhite youth sharpen their academic skills, especially concerning health, science, and related fields. Students attend summer enrichment programs and other academic skills building courses, and they also receive the counseling and support services needed to help them go on to postsecondary education.

While programs like these do help open up teaching to more minority youth, we must recognize that the problem extends beyond the supply of new teachers. Massachusetts will experience serious shifts in its teaching force, patterns in large part set in motion by Proposition 2½.

TEACHER ATTRITION IN THE CITIES

As we reach the beginning of the twenty-first century, many of our urban areas will be experiencing major attrition in their teaching staffs due to retirement. Proposition 2½ radically reduced the ranks of younger school staff members and has led to the unsettling reality that there are very few teachers in Massachusetts under the age of thirty, and relatively few under forty.

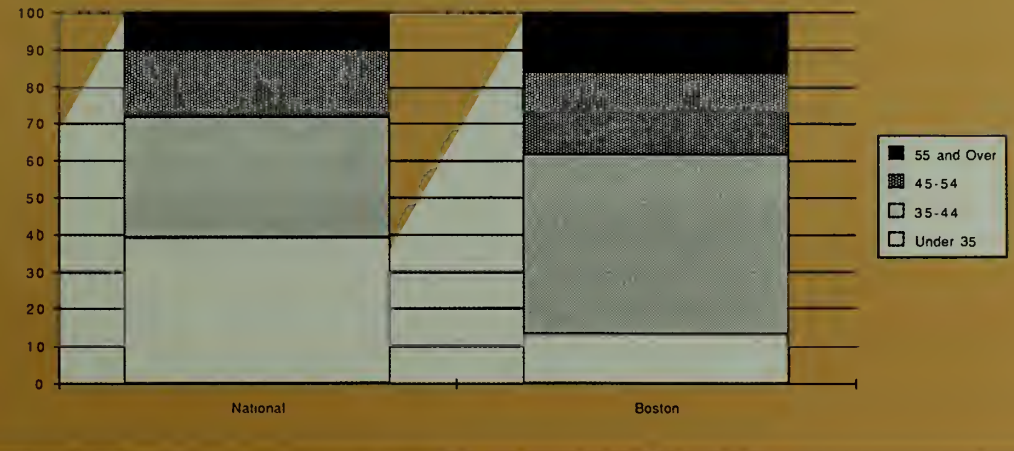
In the cities the situation is particularly alarming. A recent study in Boston, where the best data is available, showed that next year 16 percent of Boston's teachers will be over fifty-five and close to retirement. Another 22 percent are between the ages of forty-four and fifty-five, and will be retiring during the next ten to eighteen years. Thus, by early next century, 38 percent of Boston's teachers will have retired, with thousands of others having left teaching due to normal attrition. The situation is similar in other urban systems with Lawrence and Springfield expected to lose 40 percent of their teachers by the mid 1990s.

Further analysis of the teacher-age issue shows that retirement will hit general education hardest. Bilingual and special needs teachers are relatively recent arrivals in the schools and as such are generally younger than other teachers. In Boston this means that fewer of these teachers will leave due to retirement (26 percent by early next century), so more general education teachers are closer to retirement than the averages indicate.

However, even though special needs and bilingual teachers are generally younger, there are still problems involved in retaining them in the teaching force. Burn-out and opportunities for better jobs cut into the numbers of these specialists. A central conclusion of MISER's work was that there currently is a shortage of bilingual teachers in Massachusetts. City systems employ more of these specialists per capita than other areas, so finding and retaining good people who can teach non-English-speaking and special needs populations will present significant challenges for urban educators and state policymakers.

We must aggressively seek and prepare the best talent in our state to teach in the ethnically diverse classrooms of today and tomorrow. And we must vigorously apply new technologies such as educational telecommunications to the effort to educate all of the students in our classrooms. Indeed, with the prospective teacher shortages described here, the 'Star Schools' concept, initiated by the Massachusetts Corporation for Educational Telecommunications and expanded nationally by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, may be the most effective means for equalizing educational opportunity and quality in urban schools. Nothing less than such efforts will guarantee us the literate, skilled citizens we need to continue to prosper into the next century.

Age Distribution of Teachers: National and City of Boston 1984



TEACHING AT THE CROSSROADS

Twenty years ago, school was the central focus of many young people's activities. Now with many students working and often coming from poor and single-parent homes, school is sometimes seen as an intrusion or even a nuisance. As high dropout rates in the cities attest, students will simply leave if they see little value to sitting in a classroom. And, as consistently poor test results demonstrate, many students in city classrooms are not learning. The best way to reach them is through a competent, caring teacher who understands and can work productively with diverse school populations.

The University of Massachusetts is placed squarely between the classroom and the policymakers, an excellent vantage point from which to identify what can be done now to improve teaching. We have a special opportunity to draw on past experience to help connect reform endeavors to business and the public in a mutual effort to improve teaching in urban schools. Because of the centrality of good teaching to quality education, I believe that the University can best bring about urban school improvement by focusing its resources on producing the kind of teachers needed to be effective in the classrooms of our cities, with a special emphasis on recruiting and training minority teachers.

RESOURCES FOR REFORM

As I have reviewed recent reports on education reform, I have noticed what I regard as an undue tendency to emphasize what is wrong with education and teaching, to focus on the barriers arrayed against those who work to improve education. But from where I sit, I see a broad base of support for school improvement, with many people of good will committed to change.

PUBLIC SUPPORT The public at large is a major ally in the effort to improve education. In a recent University-sponsored statewide poll, 64 percent of the respondents ranked the quality of elementary and secondary education as 'extremely important' in keeping the state's economy strong. Our citizens represent a solid constituency that should be the lead partner in any reform endeavor.

STATE INITIATIVES Concerned public officials have demonstrated an active interest in teaching improvement. State Representative Nicholas Paleologos and Senator Richard Kraus have just completed a study recommending the establishment of thirty Carnegie-model schools featuring greater teacher empowerment. The Joint Task Force of Teacher Preparation, co-chaired by the Commissioner of Education and the Chancellor of the Board of Regents, has recommended changes designed to improve the entire process of teacher education.

CURRENT TEACHERS Massachusetts teachers themselves are a powerful, positive force for change in the classrooms of the Commonwealth. The people who teach our children today have already taken the initiative to focus on Carnegie-based efforts aimed at improving teaching for tomorrow. Many state education reform programs, including Horace Mann Grants and Lucretia Crocker Fellowships, are based on recognizing and publicizing the teaching excellence that abounds in many of our schools.

Beyond looking to this traditional support, I believe that the business community, a relatively recent arrival to the education arena, can be an important partner in improving urban schools. From my own experiences in Boston and Springfield, I have come to understand both the breadth and the depth of the commitment of business to improving public education.

BUSINESS AND QUALITY EDUCATION: A CONFLUENCE OF INTERESTS

Having no other mines to work, Massachusetts has mined into the human intellect; and from its limitless resources, she has won more sustaining and enduring prosperity and happiness than if she had been founded on a stratification of silver and gold, reaching deeper down than geology has yet penetrated.

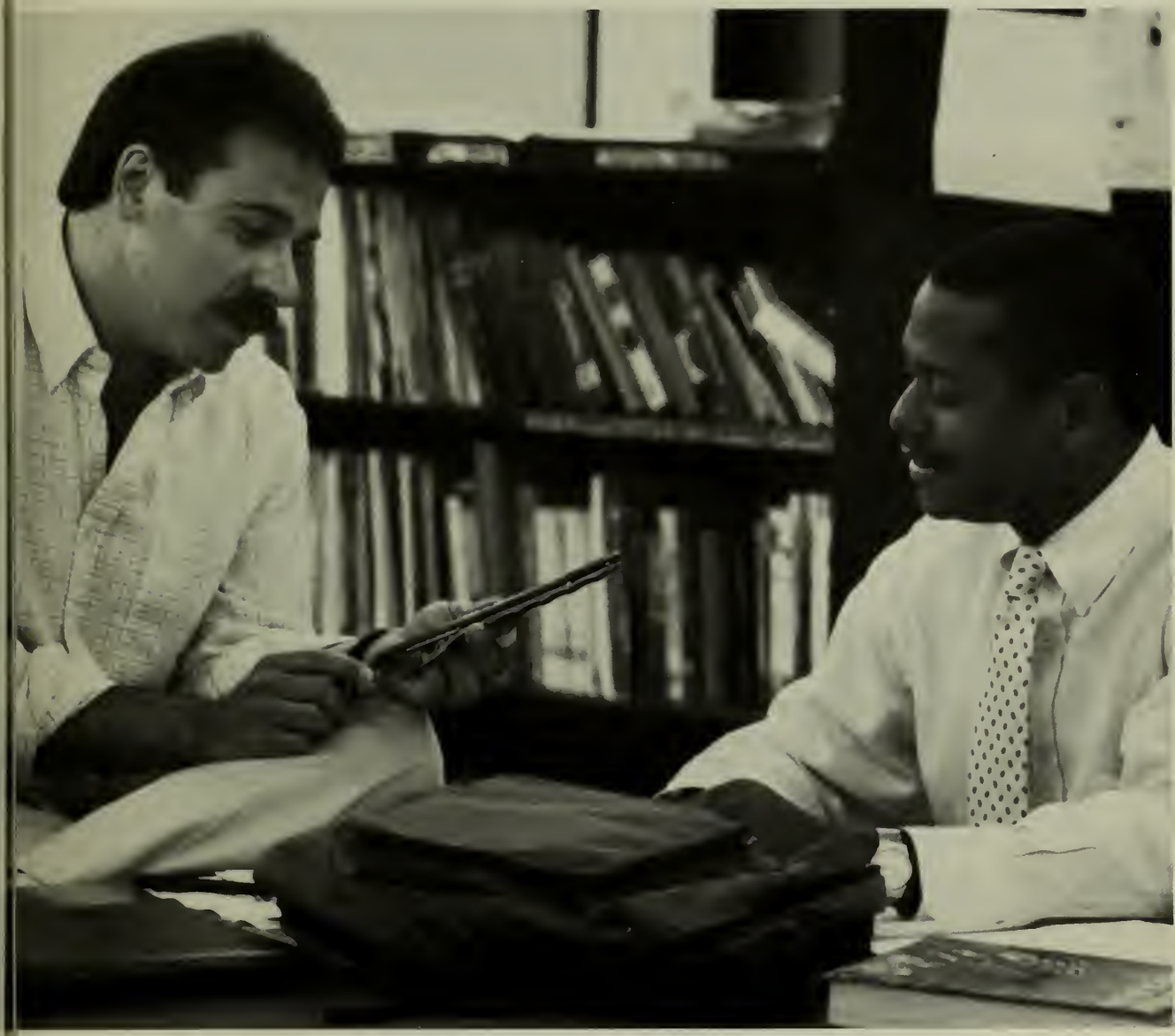
—Horace Mann

Much has changed in Massachusetts since 1847, when the first Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education wrote those words in his Tenth Annual Report, but the wisdom of his observation on the connection between quality education and a strong economy remains valid.

As the ultimate consumer of the product of the public schools, the business community has a direct interest in teaching improvement. And because many corporations are located in our larger cities, business has a special interest in the quality of urban schools. A recent survey of regional business leaders by the New England Board of Higher Education indicated that improving the schools is seen as the most important public policy priority for the future. The research also revealed that business leaders see the creation of partnerships between the private sector, government, and higher education as a key to sustained prosperity.

Massachusetts enjoys the benefits of having an enlightened private sector which recognizes the importance of quality education to corporate success. Business-initiated programs have been at the forefront of reform in the state, especially in the cities.

The Boston Compact, perhaps the best-known business contribution, has struck a solid bargain with Boston's public schools, giving graduates jobs in exchange for improved school performance. Since 1981, thousands of Boston residents have taken advantage of the program to find gainful employment, and the Compact serves as a model of what business in America can do to help public education. Edward Phillips, Chairman and CEO of The New England financial services company, spearheaded the creation of ACCESS, a nationally-acclaimed project that utilizes a private endowment to guarantee college financing for urban students. Each year the Bank of New England's Teacher Fellowship program recognizes the accomplishments of forty to sixty Boston teachers by awarding them grants and underwriting course work. In Springfield, the business-based Partnership for Excellence is developing constructive connections to the public schools. In western Massachusetts, Monsanto Chemical Company and Northeast Utilities regularly offer science teachers opportunities to keep up with the latest advances in their disciplines. The Boston Globe Foundation provides scholarship aid to hundreds of disadvantaged college students, and sponsors the innovative Voyages in Learning program which gives students and teachers hands-on experience with a classic sailing ship. These and other business-based activities are critical components of any effective reform strategy. We are fortunate that leaders in our state recognize that.



Supporting quality education is certainly in the best long-range interests of business. Large scale demographic shifts will result in fewer potential workers for our growing economy, and labor shortages are already emerging in certain sectors. Employment recruiters for major companies in the state are finding it increasingly difficult to hire enough people for entry-level jobs. Now more than at any other time in recent history, we cannot afford to waste the talents of any person.

A UNIVERSITY TEACHING IMPROVEMENT AGENDA FOR THE CITIES

In this review, I have sought to summarize the changing nature of public school education in the Commonwealth, as well as touch upon some efforts being made towards school improvement, including those of the University. In the next few years we can anticipate more changes. I expect the University to be involved with and provide leadership to the school improvement movement on all fronts—from teacher preparation to classroom learning.

Yet I am convinced that addressing one set of these issues—those relating to urban education and inner-city minority populations—is so important that it deserves special emphasis and attention. Because problems present in all our schools are often felt more acutely in the city setting, I propose that the University undertake a three-part focused program of urban public school cooperative relationships.

The first two elements of this effort involve amplifying the University's roles as teacher and researcher. For the third part of this endeavor, I propose development of an initiative that fuses the University's tradition of educational innovator with the practical commitment of the business community to upgrading teaching in the cities.

The agenda is brief, but direct. It builds on our strengths, allowing us to work on specific problems one at a time. Through it, we hope to create an atmosphere that will lead to major reform.

The three major components of the initiative are:

> The establishment of a doctoral program on the Boston Campus organized around the practical educational needs of the cities.

We are the state's leading publicly supported graduate university, and we bear a major responsibility for leadership in today's public school arena. We have educated generations of Massachusetts citizens—and thousands of teachers—over the years, and many of our graduates hold responsible administrative positions in the public schools. During the decade of the 1970s and into the 1980s the Institute of Learning and Teaching at the Boston Campus and the urban education and staff development group at the School of Education in Amherst have each made important contributions to city schools, and today the teaching mandate of Boston State College is now carried on by the Boston Campus. This work has produced networks of schools, a cadre of talented people who are currently playing leadership roles in urban systems, and a significant knowledge base. It is fitting now that we build on this base and take the next major step—to create an advanced degree curriculum which will focus its education and research on educational improvement in the cities of the Commonwealth. Through this program we can create a new corps of leaders in urban education who will contribute to the long-term well being of the state.

This doctoral program would be consistent with the mission of the University's urban campus. It would offer as well a practical means of linking an advanced academic offering to the special challenges which characterize city schools. Through it we can provide a special focus on the classroom challenges emerging from a lack of traditional family support, language and cultural differences, and other potential barriers to traditional teaching and learning. I expect this program to be forward-looking in its thinking, interdisciplinary in design, and rigorous in its expectations of students. Through this program, I would expect the University at Boston to become a state and regional center for the study and improvement of urban public school education.

University-wide academic program development grants to encourage faculty and teachers to develop innovative approaches to recruiting more minorities and other talented people into teaching.

In this paper I have made the case for greater University participation in the effort to improve urban education. In order to encourage the University community to become more actively involved in the public schools, I propose to dedicate academic program development funds to support proposals which will likely improve the quality of teaching in the urban classroom. In commemoration of the celebration of the University's 125th Anniversary, funds will be made available in the amount of $125,000 a year for two years.

The funds—a kind of venture capital—will be invested as seed money in research and development projects which are collaboratively developed by University and school faculties and which represent fresh and informed approaches to improving urban schools and urban classrooms.

MESTEP and the Urban Scholars Program, which were discussed earlier, are the kinds of 'good ideas' that these funds will encourage. Through the use of such grants, MESTEP grew from a small pilot program to a major resource for the recruitment and training of quality teachers.

Establishment of an endowment, the Commonwealth Classroom Fund, to raise and disburse money to support activities directed at improving teaching in the cities and bringing more minorities into the profession.

While I am confident that program development grants will encourage the nurturing of new approaches to improving teaching in the cities, there is a clear need to find ways to support larger programs aimed at upgrading the quality of urban schools. The Commonwealth Classroom Fund would support programs to make teaching more attractive to talented students, especially minorities.

With support from the business community, including investments from individual corporations, trade groups, and business associations, this 'public interest mutual fund' would initiate diverse activities which might include:

- ☐ establishing scholarship aid for aspiring teachers
- ☐ developing loan repayment programs for new teachers
- ☐ expanding teaching career opportunities and increasing the earning power of current teachers
- ☐ reinforcing and extending existing efforts such as the Challenge Programs, the Urban Scholars Program, and bilingual recruitment programs to encourage minority students to become teachers
- ☐ expanding current efforts to recognize and reward exemplary teaching in the Commonwealth's cities
- ☐ extending cooperative networks—with schools, community colleges, and with the private sector—to develop recruitment and preparation strategies to bring the best teachers to Massachusetts cities.
- ☐ undertaking joint marketing ventures to increase the public's awareness of the value of good teaching and the rewards of teaching as a profession.

URBAN EDUCATION PLANNING CONFERENCE

To provide impetus and further direction to each of the three urban initiatives described above, I will convene a major invitational Urban Education Planning Conference during the coming academic year. Through this conference we will reinforce our University-urban schools-corporate networks; learn from those, including our own graduates, who are urban leaders; and expand our perspectives. More specifically, we will work towards greater clarity about how best to focus our efforts in pursuing the three initiatives I have outlined. The conference will address questions such as:

What are the essential ingredients of a Massachusetts-based graduate urban education program for the twenty-first century?

What kinds of approaches may be most effective in improving urban schools and classrooms?

What are the conditions and approaches necessary for effective recruitment and retention of talented teachers, especially minority teachers?

The conference, like this entire initiative, will concentrate on developing hands-on responses to specific urban educational problems. We will craft strategies that incorporate participation by the business world as well as input from the educational community.

A SPECIAL CALLING

I believe that teaching is the key to our future, especially in our cities. Quality teachers have the power to motivate and influence students, regardless of social standing or family income. In a world of work where routine often stifles creativity, teaching represents a rare opportunity to focus an individual's talents and energy on the great task of connecting what we have been as a society with what we aspire to achieve as a people. It touches the future by harking back to our past and transmitting the values, knowledge, and traditions upon which our nation is based.

There are few avocations more important to the nation and our state than teaching. Only through qualified teachers can we prepare the young to be productive and satisfied citizens. Former CBS-TV newsman Walter Cronkite, in a speech before the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, warned that 'public ignorance may be the greatest single danger this nation faces.' He made the case that as the work world becomes more complex and information-driven, a growing functional illiteracy may well retard economic growth and unravel the civic culture itself. Making sure that we have enough good teachers in the schools is the best way to make sure that future generations are capable of full participation in American life.

Yet today teaching is seen as 'just another job' by most of us, including many of our teachers. In order to attract the kind of outstanding individuals who are able to stimulate and motivate today's students, we will have to make teaching as desirable a profession as occupations such as law or banking, or being a university president. Ultimately, teaching is a

more important calling than any of those. It may be unrealistic to assume that education salaries will suddenly match the offerings of Wall Street, but there are other steps that we, as educators, business leaders, elected officials, and individuals, can take to move teaching to the forefront of our social agenda.

If we confine our attention to determining whether or not we will have enough teachers, we miss the main point of the issue of teacher supply. Our obligation is not just to fill the teaching rolls, but rather to move our best to the front of the classroom.

Despite the serious problems that confront us, bringing excellence into our classrooms is not an unreachable goal. With new technologies like interactive telecommunications, and with the support of a business community sensitive to the importance of ensuring teaching excellence, we can succeed. We must effectively utilize all the new resources that are available to us to make teaching more appealing to more people, but we must never lose sight of the central fact that teaching, on its own merits, is a worthwhile vocation. As my family realized down through the years, life in the classroom offers rewards beyond those available in other careers.

Teaching is a challenging profession that provides a rare opportunity to make a real difference for the better in the lives of individuals. Patricia Perchard, a teacher at the Joseph Lee School in Boston, takes great satisfaction in teaching first-graders how to read. 'It's tremendously satisfying to teach a child and see him gradually learn how to read between September and June. Sure, there are problems with teaching, but I go home at night feeling good about what I accomplished.'

Richard Zagranski, who has been teaching English at South Hadley High School in western Massachusetts for over twenty years, is not thrilled with the cafeteria duty and paperwork that are part of his day, but he has chosen to stay in teaching. 'When you sense that you've broken through and the class is really learning, it's a great feeling. You can't get that anywhere else.'

There will be no easy victories in the continuing effort to make teaching a more attractive profession both to those in the classroom and to those who pay for public education. But we must begin to achieve successes, even small ones, and build on those successes as we restore teaching to its rightful place as a proud profession. The University is in the right place at the right time to help make education work for everyone in our society, just as it did for my ancestors and for countless generations of Americans. All of us who have achieved a measure of success owe our good fortune in major part to those who taught us and prepared us for our careers. It is time to return the favor to the one profession from which all other professions spring. We all must become involved. We owe it to the memory of those who taught us, and to the promise of those who will come after us.

SOURCES

P. 5—*A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century, The Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession*, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy.

—*State Education Leader*, (December 1986), p. 1.

—Hodgkinson's observations appear in the December, 1986, issue of *Kappan*, pp. 273–274.

P. 6—Harold Hodgkinson raised these points concerning enrollment figures in the Boston schools at the February 14, 1985 Alden Seminar. They appear on p. 10 of the *Alden Seminar White Paper* from that meeting which is available from the Alden Seminars office at the University of Massachusetts Downtown Boston campus.

—The report of the legislature's *Special Commission on Hispanics* (Boston, 1985) provides much useful information on Hispanic-Americans in Massachusetts.

—*Boston Globe*, March 16, 1987, p. 1.

—See the *Report on the Status of Teacher Supply and Demand in Massachusetts* by the Massachusetts Institute of Social and Economic Research (MISER) at the University's Amherst campus, for the best data available in this area. Table 75 summarizes the information on minority student population growth.

—See *The Urban Challenge*, a Joint Project of the National Education Association and the New Jersey Education Association, analyzes the New Jersey situation on p. 5 of its report. The Massachusetts data comes from the MISER Report, Table 74.

P. 7—Commissioner Raynold's comments are cited in the *Boston Herald*, November 25, 1986, p. 3.

—Information of drop-outs is available from the superintendents' offices of the various school systems. Many cities have only limited data available with Boston having the most extensive information available in this area.

—*A Nation Prepared*, page 14, contains the quotation from the National Alliance of Business's *Employement Policies: Looking to the Year 2000.*

—*Boston Globe*, April 12, 1987, p. 1.

P. 8—Alden Seminar, February 14, 1985.

—MISER Executive Summary, Point 32

—For an interesting overview of the teacher supply situation, see *U. S. News & World Review*, May 26, 1986, p. 53.

—The UCLA/ACE study is discussed in *Education Week*, January 14, 1987, pp. 12, 18.

P. 11—*A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century, The Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession*, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, p. 14.

—MISER *Executive Summary*, Points 40, 36.

P. 13—"A Teacher Recruitment Policy for the Boston Public Schools," Wendy S. Hoffenberg, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, MA. Mr. Manuel Monteiro, Director of Personnel for the Boston School System, also has information on the demographics of the Boston teaching force.

P. 15—*An Attitudinal Survey Among Massachusetts Residents*, University of Massachusetts Poll (April 1986), p. 45.

P. 16—Mann's comments appear in "The Ground of the Free School System," *Old South Leaflets*, v.5 (Boston: The Directors of the Old South Work, 1902), p. 20.

—*The Future of New England*, 1987 Survey of Business, Government and Higher Education Leaders, New England Board of Higher Education, Boston, MA.

Special thanks to Robert Gaudet, Bryan Harvey, and Professor Richard Clark for their assistance in the preparation of this paper.

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